

# St Dennis Parish Council Biodiversity Policy

## Introduction

Biodiversity refers to the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable<sup>1</sup>. It encompasses the diversity of species, their genes, and their ecosystems<sup>2</sup>. Biodiversity is essential for the survival of all living organisms on Earth, including humans. It provides us with food, medicine, and other resources that we depend on for our well-being<sup>2</sup>. However, human activities such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change are causing a decline in biodiversity at an alarming rate<sup>2</sup>. This loss of biodiversity can have serious consequences for the environment and human health<sup>2</sup>.

Under the Environmental Act 2021<sup>3</sup> St Dennis Parish Council have a duty to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the Parish and the areas that we maintain.

St Dennis Parish Council recognizes it has an important leadership role to play in creating a sustainable community environment where biodiversity can thrive. We therefore commit to conserve and increase biodiversity throughout the Parish, taking positive action through innovation in the management of open spaces and verges as well as conservation of natural areas.

As a Parish Council we will:

- Adopt beneficial practices and work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity.
- Wherever possible raise public awareness of biodiversity issues within the local community.
- When making decisions ensure that biodiversity is at the forefront of what we do.
- When considering planning applications, we will support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through conservation and integration of existing habitats or the provision of new habitats.
- Support the protection of sensitive habitats from development and consider whether developments would adversely impact on existing important habitats for wildlife.

As a Landowner we will:

- Proactively promote the use of native species when planting.
- Avoid the use of herbicides except in exceptional circumstances.
- Time grounds maintenance work or vegetation removal to minimize the impact on biodiversity.
- Maintenance practices which are beneficial to biodiversity will be taken into consideration when contracts are placed.
- Will involve the community in promoting biodiversity and living areas on its land including, for example, tree planting, developing living areas and wilding areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Dictionaries (n.d) Biodiversity

<sup>2</sup> National Geographic Society, <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/biodiversity>

<sup>3</sup> [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uk/acts/2021/1)